

REMARKS

Independent claim 1 has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the present invention. Also, claim 1 has been amended to include the substance of claim 6, which has been cancelled. Claim 8 has been added to more clearly particularize the screw or thread mechanism shown in Fig. 9. Claims 1-4 , 7 and 8 remain for consideration.

Claims 1-4 and 6 were previously rejected as being unpatentable over Petterson in view of Kobayashi et al. Applicant submits that claims 1-4, 7 and 8 standing in this application are patentable over Petterson in view of Kobayashi et al.. According to the present invention, the illumination apparatus comprises a distance varying means that can vary the distance between the forward projecting means and the light source. As recited in claim 1, the illumination apparatus includes a transparent cover joined to a front end of the forward projecting means to cover the opening of the light source-fixing member. The distance varying means includes “ a screw mechanism connecting said protective cover and said light source-fixing member that can vary a distance between said forward projecting means and said light source”. With reference to Fig. 9 of the present application, for example, it can be seen that the protective cover 1 is threaded or screwed onto complementary threads on the front end of the light source-fixing member 7. By this simple feature, the light distribution pattern can be formed by two light distribution mechanisms of the forward projecting means and the reflecting mirror and the light arriving at the reflecting mirror from the light source is always projected forward with a good directivity as parallel rays parallel to the optical axis (see page 3, lines 16-18). Therefore, even if the illumination range ahead is expanded by an operation of varying the position of the forward projecting means or the like, the

luminance at the center region ahead can always be kept at a predetermined level or higher.

Claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Petterson in view of Kobayashi et al. The Examiner recognizes that Petterson fails to suggest any distance varying means. Kobayashi et al is relied upon to show “distance varying means that can vary a distance between said forward projecting means and said light source while the light source is positioned fixedly relative to the reflecting mirror”. Kobayashi et al is Fig. 2 suggests a lens drive mechanism 7 having an X-axis drive 9 and a Y-axis drive 10. The X-axis drive and the Y-axis drive are each relatively complicated mechanisms including multiple components. With reference to col. 5, lines 3-10, it is noted that the X-axis drive of Kobayashi et al. includes a screw shaft 17, which is rotatably supported on the lens frame 5 and extends parallel to the optical axis L. The X-axis screw shaft is rotated via a drive gear 18 and a reduction mechanism 19 by means of an X-axis DC drive motor 15 to thereby move the movable lens 8 in the X direction. Applicant’s simple construction recited in claim 1 stands in sharp contrast to the complex structure of Kobayashi et al. As noted above, in the present invention, the transparent protective cover 1 can be screwed forward and backward on the light source fixing member 7 by one hand to vary the illumination range head of the illumination apparatus. The screw or thread connection as shown in Fig. 9 is nowhere suggested in either Petterson or Kobayashi et al. In the present invention adjustment between the forward projecting means and the light source can be reliably implemented without adding new elements. The combination of prior art proposed by the Examiner does not teach the claimed invention. Further, there appears to be no reason to make the suggested combination without resort to the present disclosure. Hindsight is not an appropriate basis for rejection where the art itself fails to suggest the combination proposed by the Examiner. Claim 1 patentably distinguishes Petterson in

view of Kobayashi et al. and should be allowed. Dependent claims 2-4, 7 and 8 should be allowed together with claim 1.

Claim 7 was rejected as being unpatentable over Petterson in view of Kobayashi et al. and Lindner. Lindner was cited to show an LED light source. However, Lindner does not overcome the shortcomings of Petterson or Kobayashi et al. noted above. There is no suggestion in Lindner of illumination apparatus including a distance varying means including a screw mechanism that can vary a distance between the forward projecting means and the light source. Claim 7, which is dependent upon claim 1, and includes the limitations thereof, defines patentable subject matter and should be allowed together with claim 1.

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application are solicited.

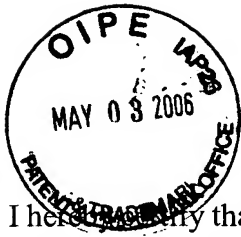
Respectfully submitted,

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